Quest for Beauty and Novelty : A Study of Women in the Plays of Tennessee Williams

A

SYNOPSIS

SUBMITTED TO

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IN

ENGLISH

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Introduction

Tennessee Williams is America's greatest playwright and one of the world's most popular with actors as well as with audiences. He is also a novelist, screenwriter, and short story writer. All of his life, Williams was, without a doubt, influenced strongly by the female figures. He once commented in an interview, “All my relationships with women are very, very important to me,” continuing, “I understand women, and I can write about them” (Gussow).

It is often commented that Williams treats his female characters very harshly, but still manages to portray them in a graceful and dignified manner. “People who care the most for me are women,” he said. “Perhaps that's always been true” (Gussow). He was deeply interested in something he called "poetic realism," namely the use of everyday objects which, seen repeatedly and in the right contexts, become imbued with symbolic meaning. His plays also seemed preoccupied with the extremes of human brutality and sexual behavior: madness, rape, incest, nymphomania, as well as violent and fantastic deaths.

The plays of Williams reflect many of the characteristics of Southern writers noted by literary critics in the modernist era, beginning in the twenties and thirties. He possesses an extraordinary ability to portray women with a very human paintbrush. Williams understood women. He empathised. He had a feminine nature. He understood loss and longing and displacement in a society that had no regard for women.

The Plays of Tennessee Williams have the richness of a creative artist. He is an investigative pioneer--of innovative terrains, practices, and literatures-co-existent with his wide-ranging mission to discover new worlds.

A Brief Review of the Work Done in the Field

Norman J. Fedder, *The Influence of D. H. Lawrence on Tennessee, Williams* (London: Monton and Co., 1966) Benjamin Nelson, *Tennessee Williams: His Life and Work* (London: Peter Owen, 1961) Esther Harley Jackson, *The Broken World of Tennessee Williams* (Madison and Milwaukee: University of Wisconsin Press, 1965) Alans. Downers, *Recent American Drama* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1966) are the works written on the plays of Tennessee Williams. These works reflect the essential features of his writings. Numerous articles and literary reviews have also been published by various scholars.

Objectives

The objective of the proposed work is to investigate and probe into the plight of Women and to give awareness.

Noteworthy Contribution in the Field of the Proposed Work

Various scholars and researchers have published their research works on the popular plays of Tennessee Williams. In their works, they have focused on the various characteristic features of his writings; notable of them are Signi Lenea Falk, Foster Hirsch, Nancy M. Tischler and Dharnidhar Sahu. Their writings have given a deep insight and guidance to other researchers to investigate the plays of Tennessee Williams.

Proposed Methodology for the Research Work

Research is a great task that requires a lot of strength, determination and effort. It is, at the same time, plays significant role in enhancing and expanding our knowledge. It takes the reader into fathoms depth of knowledge. The endeavour would be to probe into the selected plays of Tennessee Williams thorough perusal of the primary sources. The secondary sources will be helpful for enhancing the knowledge, and they would be of a great help in accomplishing the research work. The plays of the other playwrights who have affinity in style of their writings would help a great deal in this regard. **The latest edition of MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers will be followed while writing my research work.**

Chapterization of the Proposed Research Work

Chapter I : Introduction

Tennessee Williams was a master playwright of twentieth century. The first chapter will throw light on the life and works of Tennessee Williams. He is widely considered the greatest Southern playwright and one of the greatest playwrights in the history of American drama. His most renowned plays will also be assessed in this chapter along with his biographical detail.

Chapter II : Quest for Beauty in the Plays of Tennessee Williams

This Chapter will highlight all the women characters and those circumstances that reveal the complexities of their world - both within and without. It will intend to reveal the yearning of women for comfort and admiration. The women characters are ill treated in this male dominating society. They are always in search of their existence in the brutal world. They desire to replace violence with love and loneliness with company and thus make their lives beautiful.

Chapter III : Quest for Novelty in the Plays of Tennessee Williams

Chapter III will deal with Tennessee Williams' concern with sex and failure as depicted in his various plays with women's desire for novelty. The chapter will highlight the inner torment and disintegration of the women characters. The women haunted by a past are interested in yesterday or tomorrow rather than in today. Thus the chapter will depict women's quest for novelty and identity.

Chapter IV : Motherhood vs Womanhood

This chapter will throw light on the Motherhood and Womanhood of Southern America. It will also present the variegated and multifaceted feminine characters of his plays. The Chapter will reveal how the women are losing their feminine qualities in search of beauty and novelty.

Chapter V : Conclusion

The last chapter will be in the form of conclusion of the entire content of the thesis. The issues concerned with the topic of the thesis work by the playwright will thoroughly be examined. The contribution of Tennessee Williams as a playwright will be evaluated taking all the features of his writings into consideration.

Expected Outcome of the Proposed Work

Tennessee Williams has understood the intricate responses, postures and mysteries of the feminine. He has portrayed them through the dynamics of ordinary situations and interpersonal relationship. He has enriched the feminine with vital details from his own sensibility, with differentia from his own experience by presenting the Southern American Women in all her

different shades. These characters create masculine power to the frustrated and anxiety – ridden Women – Characters in the society. Hence, the expected outcome of the proposed work would provide a great deal of knowledge regarding Women in Contemporary Society of Southern America.

List of the Papers Published by the Candidate:- None

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